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Individualism vs. Collectivism

    Should people be forced to be like everyone else? Or should they be able to have their own thoughts and opinions? This is how collectivism and individualism differ. Collectivism is the practice or principle of giving a group priority over each individual in it. On the other hand,  individualism is the habit or principle of being independent and self-reliant (Individualism Vs. Collectivism). Individualism is the way society should function because people should be able to form their own beliefs and opinions, and be rewarded for their hard work.

    People should be able to form their own beliefs and opinions, but if they are a part of a group, that can be difficult. This is due to the fact that being a part of a group can alter the way people think of things, if it is not how the group perceives the topic.  Many people don’t realize that “we really have the power to define ourselves, as opposed to the world defining us.” (Graham) Collectivism doesn’t allow a person to grow, but instead keeps them in one small, tight space with nowhere to go. “And people cannot thrive when they perceive themselves to be stuck in a bubble, when they have lost confidence in their ability” (Graham). This keeps an individual from being able to make decisions, opinions and choices on their own, whereas individualism allows these things to occur. Allowing people to have their own opinions and beliefs can also help them form and achieve their own goals in life, which in return can be very gratifying.

     People should be able to obtain rewards for their hard work. Individualism has the belief that people should earn what they have, whereas collectivism has the belief that no matter how hard you work, you get the same as someone who doesn’t work hard. Collectivists have the idea that everyone will be content with sharing, “but all [people] must have someone or something to be proud of,” (Hurst).  At some point in time, each individual is going to want something that belongs just to them due to their hard work, and everyone should be able to have that privilege.

    Collectivists support the idea of having an equal society, and that everyone contributes equally. Despite the evidence against collectivism, many people believe that they should work together to get things done, but they fail to see that many people struggle to have their own ideas, opinions and beliefs because of collectivism (Individualism vs. Collectivism). People who do not provide as much effort as others  still receive the exact same benefits. Collectivists believe that the individual has little to no rights, and must sacrifice his values and goals for the group’s “greater good.”  Although aspects of this argument are appealing, it ultimately fails to be a stronger argument because at some point in time, every human will want to have something of their own that they alone have earned,  whether it’s property, housing, opinions or values.

     Individualism is more important than collectivism because people should be able to form their own opinions and be rewarded for their hard work. Collectivists have been taught, by a group, to believe that sacrificing parts of themselves for the greater good is the best thing. Is it really? Individualists give people the power to decide.  The fact remains that the individual, not the community, has a mind; the individual, not the group, does the thinking.

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